



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/496,408	02/02/2000	Hon Siu Shin	7414.0018	6158

22852 7590 05/15/2003

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW, GARRETT & DUNNER  
LLP  
1300 I STREET, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

EXAMINER
----------

BEX, PATRICIA K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1743

DATE MAILED: 05/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

### EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. Claims 1-2, 4, 6-8, 10, 18, 19-23, 40-49 are allowable.
2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Troy Grabow on May 7, 2003.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 19, last paragraph, line 3, "urging mechanism", has been changed to --the plurality of spring devices--.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the instant claims are drawn to an apparatus for thermally cycling biological samples comprising: a sample block having a plurality of openings for receiving sample wells of a sample well tray therein, the sample well having closed sample well bottoms configured to contain a sample, the plurality of openings for receiving sample wells being configured to contact an outer surface of a corresponding sample well. None of the prior art teaches or suggests a thermal cycling apparatus wherein the sample block further comprises: a plurality of receiving portions in a top surface thereof; and a plurality of spring devices interposed between the sample block and the sample well tray, the plurality of spring devices being positioned at least partially in the plurality of receiving portions, the plurality of spring devices imparting an urging force on the sample tray, the plurality of spring devices creating the urging force to urge the sample wells away from the

Art Unit: 1743

openings in the sample block upon removal of a pressing force imparted on the top of the sample well tray for pressing the sample wells into the openings of the sample block.

4. All claims are allowable. However, due to a potential interference, ex parte prosecution is SUSPENDED FOR A PERIOD OF 6 MONTHS from the date of this letter. Upon expiration of the period of suspension, applicant should make an inquiry as to the status of the application.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to P. Kathryn Bex whose telephone number is (703) 306-5697. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays-Thursdays, alternate Fridays from 6:00 am to 3:30 pm EST. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill Warden can be reached on 308-4037.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

*Kathryn Bex*

P. Kathryn Bex  
Patent Examiner  
AU 1743  
May 14, 2003

*Jill Warden*  
Jill Warden  
Supervisory Patent Examiner  
Technology Center 1700